

Today, I am pleased to celebrate the League of Black Women's annual leadership conference. More than 200 attendees from major corporations are expected to participate in five days of leadership development forums and executive presentations, which commence today.

The League of Black Women was founded in the 1970's by Dr. Arnita Young Boswell and works to provide successful, strategic and sustaining leadership experiences for minority professionals and students. The League provides continuing executive-level education to its nearly 10,000 members worldwide. Other services provided by the League include professional leadership coaching, mentor outreach to school-age students, and support of small businesses.

This year's conference theme is 'Black Women 2010: Global Ready.' As a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I was honored to receive an invitation to participate in this year's forum titled 'Women of Color in the U.S. Intelligence Community' and share insight on the prospects of women in Intelligence rising to higher leadership ranks. Unfortunately, due to Congress being in session, I am unable to attend.

However, I strongly believe that diversity in the intelligence community cannot be overstated. It is one of our greatest strengths, as it is essential to addressing increasingly complex national security threats. We must continue to acquire and maintain an intelligence workforce that mirrors our nation and the world within which we operate.

With the hard work of the League of Black Women and other organizations committed to innovative diversity education and leadership research, we can create and sustain a diverse intelligence workforce. Again, I want to congratulate the League of Black Women on their annual conference. I am sure that it will be a tremendous success.